

Small businesses are our Nation's job creators. According to the Small Business Administration, small businesses employ more than half of all workers and have generated two-out-of-three net new jobs since the 1970s.

Small businesses also make an outsized contribution to our Nation's economy, generating half of our Nation's GDP, 54 percent of all U.S. sales, 41 percent of private sector payroll, and one-third of our Nation's export value. Their success is critical to the health of our economy.

Unfortunately, our Nation's small businesses face a higher tax burden that affects their ability to compete with large firms in the marketplace. In fact, a recent survey by the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, found that concerns about Federal taxes on business income ranked third on the list of the top 10 problems facing small businesses.

Nearly all of our Nation's small businesses are organized as passthroughs, meaning that their profits are passed on to their owners and reported on individual income tax returns. This means that small business income is subject to taxation at individual rates, which can be as high as 39.6 percent at the Federal level and can exceed 50 percent in some States. If we want our small businesses to grow and create jobs, we must reduce these high marginal rates.

I believe Congress should undertake comprehensive tax reform to make our Tax Code simpler, fairer, and more pro-growth. As we do so, we must make sure American businesses of every size are given the opportunity to compete. Aligning the tax rate for passthroughs with our corporate tax rate will ensure small businesses are not left behind. That is why Senator NELSON and I introduced the Main Street Fairness Act, which will link the tax rates of passthrough entities and large corporations, to ensure that small businesses never pay a higher tax rate than large companies.

This simple change will help make sure that small businesses remain healthy and strong, so they can continue to serve as our Nation's job creators, as they have for so many years. I would note that the Main Street Fairness Act has been endorsed by the NFIB, the leading voice for America's small businesses, and I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting it.

I ask unanimous consent to have a letter of endorsement from the NFIB printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
INDEPENDENT BUSINESS,
Washington, DC, April 3, 2017.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
U.S. Senate, Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BILL NELSON,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS COLLINS AND NELSON: On behalf of the National Federation of Inde-

pendent Business (NFIB), the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, we write in strong support of S. 707—The Main Street Fairness Act. This legislation would reduce taxes on pass-through businesses and make them more competitive, and ensure that all businesses, large and small alike, compete on a level playing field going forward.

The vast majority of small businesses are organized as pass-through entities, which pay tax on business income at the individual tax rates, which are currently as high as 39.6 percent, and not at the corporate tax rate, which is currently as high as 35 percent. Such entities include any company organized as a sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC, or S-Corporation. The Main Street Fairness Act would ensure that those pass-through businesses never pay a higher tax rate than businesses organized as C-Corporations, and immediately reduce the tax rate on pass-through businesses currently paying more than 35 percent.

Small businesses are the major source of growth and job creation in our economy. In fact, according to the Small Business Administration (SBA), small businesses account for 64 percent of the net new private sector jobs created in America and make up 99.7 percent of U.S. employer firms. The high tax burden currently facing small businesses holds back investments, growth, hiring, and entrepreneurship. One in five small businesses struggles with cash-flow, which is needed to not only run their businesses but also support their families. Specifically, after-tax income is an especially important source of capital for small businesses. High tax rates mean less money that small business owners have to reinvest back into their business.

Because of this, small businesses strongly support tax reform that simplifies the tax code, lowers tax rates on businesses, and promotes economic growth. The Main Street Fairness Act will help ensure that all businesses, regardless of how they organize, enjoy the benefits of any reduction in tax rates that would be included in tax reform. We appreciate your continued leadership on this key issue and look forward to working with you as Congress considers tax reform.

Sincerely,

JUANITA D. DUGGAN,
President & CEO.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today I want to join my friend SUSAN COLLINS and talk about why I support the Main Street Fairness Act. I am glad to partner on this bill with the Senator from Maine.

The bill does one simple thing: It ensures small businesses don't have to pay higher taxes than the largest corporations. This is the type of common sense that we need more of in Washington.

There are 2.3 million small businesses in Florida, employing around 43.2 percent of the State's workforce. They are the primary engine of job growth in the country, and are a proven means for economic mobility.

Under most circumstances, small businesses are subject to the same rules as large corporations but are treated differently under the Tax Code. They already have a hard enough time competing with large multinational corporations, which can hire an endless stream of high-priced tax lawyers to shift their income abroad and avoid U.S. taxes.

We should be doing all we can to put small businesses on a more level play-

ing field. Part of that starts with this bill, but it doesn't end here. We need to do comprehensive tax reform.

This bill should be part of that conversation, as one way we could help small businesses. It is not the only way, and I am certainly open to other ideas, but we need to have a serious talk about how we are going to freshen up the Tax Code and help the economy grow.

I know a lot of my colleagues have different ideas about what tax reform should look like, but I think we should all be able to agree that it needs to be real reform, not just a temporary tax cut. It needs to support a technology-driven economy and help us transition to a greener, fairer economy—with a lot less disparity.

Tax reform should also generate enough added revenue to pay for the infrastructure we desperately need. That includes the crumbling roads and bridges that threaten the safety of millions of Americans and are a tax on small businesses. We also need to invest in our water infrastructure, energy infrastructure, ports, railways, public schools, and affordable housing infrastructure.

At the same time, tax reform needs to be deficit neutral. You might ask, how are we going to pay for all this? Well, we can start by getting rid of outdated special interest tax breaks that are no longer needed or don't make sense in the 21st century.

We can also eliminate tax loopholes that allow companies to shift profits abroad and lead to corporate inversions.

This bill, the Main Street Fairness Act, is a good start, but it shouldn't end here. We need to have a serious, deliberative effort to develop a bipartisan tax reform package.

TRIBUTE TO WAYNE KINNEY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the retirement of my friend Wayne Kinney.

Wayne is retiring as my central Oregon field representative after more than two decades of outstanding service to our State—and more specifically serving at one point or another the residents of Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wheeler, and Wasco Counties.

Suffice to say, Wayne knows everyone, and most of those folks could spend hours recounting their own tales of this quintessential public servant.

Simply put, he will be deeply missed.

But before Wayne takes his well-deserved retirement to his native New England—where he can be nearer to family and maintain closer supervision of his beloved Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots—I want to share my personal appreciation for this exemplary public servant, all-around good guy, and wonderfully avuncular curmudgeon.

Wayne can forever lay claim to a significant piece of Oregon history. He opened Oregon's first Senate field office east of the Cascades shortly after I first took office in 1996.

Wayne opened and ran my eastern Oregon office in La Grande before moving to Bend.

In his service to Oregonians, he has put more miles than anybody I know on Oregon roads, at all hours, in all kinds of weather, to towns where there often are more cows than people.

Wayne's fierce sense of loyalty and commitment to public service has driven him to cover all the ground he has over the years from Wasco to Wagontire, Ontario to Olene, Joseph to John Day, Bend to Burns, Madras to Mitchell, and all points in between.

That loyalty extends to the rural communities he serves and the Oregonians in those communities who might not otherwise have a voice.

Wayne always keeps the door open for cattlemen, farmers, and countless others who often feel the government is removed from their struggles.

It is Wayne's ability to reach out and make connections with all of those folks that played such a large part in ensuring "every nook and cranny" in Oregon gets a voice.

Wayne is not just a champion in general for rural Oregon communities. He has also proven to be an able advocate for creating opportunities for rural women that allows them to bring their voices into statewide discussions.

Let me tell a couple of anecdotes about Wayne to provide a glimpse into this wonderful character—and all that he has meant to Oregon.

For my colleagues who have not been to central and eastern Oregon, I would only note that the distances between towns can be great, but Wayne never let those long drives be a roadblock.

In fact, his goal was to be anywhere and everywhere. He achieved that goal by—I believe in his words—making sure that, if anybody was so much as dedicating a new soda machine, he would be there to put in the first dollar.

Just as great at times as the challenges of distance in his area are the weather challenges. Again, Wayne never let that be a roadblock.

I remember well flying into rural Condon, OR, for a townhall in the snow, and who should I see with the local police chief sweeping the runway of snow? Wayne.

It has been said by some that there is an unbridgeable urban-rural divide in Oregon. I know from more than 800 townhalls in every part of Oregon, that is untrue.

In fact, I have come to use the term "the Oregon way" to describe how it is in our State's DNA to put aside partisanship in favor of civil conversations to find the best solutions.

Among the many tributes in recent days in Oregon to my friend, I was struck by something I read about Wayne that captures how he "lived and breathed" the Oregon way.

On Wayne's Facebook page recently, a Republican posted this powerful praise: "Had lunch today with a good friend. Politically, Wayne and I are polar opposites. He is a Democrat, an officer with the Oregon Democratic Party and staff member with Senator Wyden, and I have served on the Executive Committee of the Oregon Republican Party, as well as County Central Committee Chairman. Over the years, we have had some great discussions, even disagreements about some very important issues, but we have handled our disagreements respectfully and remained friends. Wayne has announced his retirement and is also leaving our great state to move back east so he can be near family. The Oregon Democrats, and Senator Wyden are losing a tremendous asset, and a great leader of their Party."

Oregon truly is losing a tremendous asset, and so am I.

I will miss Wayne tremendously, but I take heart that his work will live on in the issues he has resolved for Oregon and the relationships he has deepened among Oregonians.

As Wayne begins his well-earned retirement, he has my eternal gratitude, and he has Oregon's.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO PRINCIPLES FOR REFORMING THE MILITARY SELECTIVE SERVICE PROCESS—PM 5

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith Principles for Reforming the Military Selective Service Process, in accordance with section 555 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328), which calls for the President to establish principles for reform of the military selective service process in support of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, April 3, 2017.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1161. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Wireline Competition Bureau, Fed-

eral Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Connect America Fund; Universal Service Reform—Mobility Fund" ((WC Docket No. 10-90, WT Docket No. 10-208) (FCC 17-11)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1162. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section 73.202(b), FM Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Mullin, Texas)" ((MB Docket No. 16-362) (DA 17-237)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1163. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Functional Design, Qualification, and Inservice Testing Programs for Pumps, Valves, and Dynamic Restraints" (NUREG-0800, Section 3.9.6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1164. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Control Rod Drive Systems" (NUREG-0800, Section 3.9.4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1165. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Dynamic Testing and Analysis of Systems, Structures, and Components" (NUREG-0800, Section 3.9.2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1166. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reactor Pressure Vessel Internals" (NUREG-0800, Section 3.9.5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1167. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Evaluation by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation License Renewal Appendix A for 'BWRVIP-241: BWR Vessel and Internals Project, Probabilistic Fracture Mechanics Evaluation for the Boiling Water Reactor Nozzle-to-Vessel Shell Welds and Nozzle Blend Radii,' and 'BWRVIP-108NP: BWR Vessel and Internals Project, Technical Basis for the Reduction of Inspection Requirements for the Boiling Water Reactor Nozzle-to-Vessel Shell Weld and Nozzle Blend' Project No. 704" (BWRVIP-241, appendix A and BWRVIP-108NP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 29, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1168. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's fiscal year 2016 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.